

Since My Last Confession

by Joseph B

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Summary: A short scene that takes place during the episode Sanctuary

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ANGEL

"....SINCE MY LAST CONFESSION"

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Disclaimer: I don't own any of the characters from "Angel." They were created by Joss Whedon and David Greenwalt. So kudos to them and everyone else involved in the making of a great series.

Author's notes: This takes place during "Sanctuary."

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"Are you sure you want to do this?" Angel asked.

" . . . Yeah. I'm sure."

"There are other ways for you to atone."

"I'm human. This is where humans atone."

Angel pulled out the chair and sat down across from the young brunette who looked younger than she really was for the first time since seeing her here in L.A. Even that day in town when she had tried to shoot him in the back with a crossbow in that busy lobby, with a smile on her face, he immediately saw the torment in her eyes. The playful smile could not hide how old her soul had become. The path of destruction she was unable to keep herself from plunging

into. He hadn't been far from the truth when he told Buffy she was crying out for help when she tried to kill him. She may be able to go against the strongest demons, face the most unspeakable dangers, and walk into certain-death situations without hesitation but one thing was true.

Faith was afraid of dying.

She wasn't afraid to face death, she just needed him to do it for her. Something she could not bring herself to do. Kill the monster she saw she had become. The small part of Faith that was the young teenager who had come to Sunnydale eager to fight the good fight was still in there. Screaming to break free of the pit of darkness she had trapped herself in.

When he had refused to do it, the small Faith had broke the surface pleading for him to kill her. And now that she was out, she had to fight to stay afloat, to keep from drowning once more in the pain of her guilt weighing down on her.

The last couple of days had been a struggle for her. There were a few times during her stay with him she had almost retreated back into her fortress of pain and rage, where she could bury her conscience from everybody, the world, and, most importantly, from herself. But he was able to keep her from falling. He couldn't have done it if she hadn't wanted to. Needed to.

She had surprised everyone by turning herself in. She probably surprised Buffy most of all, he thought. She was still insisting that this was all a scam on Faith's part. Being a Slayer she could most likely escape from this place at anytime. But Angel saw the truth in Faith's eyes. With everything Faith had done to Buffy he couldn't really blame her for not believing in Faith. Since Faith's problems started no one had tried to help her more than Buffy had, not even Angel. But the fact that Buffy seemed to have given up on Faith worried him. She was the strongest person he knew and she never gave up on anybody. It just wasn't her.

Giles hadn't really told him what had happened after Faith awoke from her coma. Faith had given him a few more details but he had a feeling he still hadn't heard the whole story. He wasn't sure he wanted to hear the whole story.

He looked around the interrogation room they were in.

"It's not the best place for atonement," he said.

"I suppose you're an authority on that as well," she said, with a hint of smile. A real smile.

". . . I happen to know a little about it."

She lowered her eyes to the cuffs on her wrists. She entwined her fingers and the tiny chain clinked on the surface of the table.

"It's where they keep the evil people."

"You're not evil anymore."

"Are you sure?" She met his gaze.

"Yes."

She just looked into his eyes for a few long seconds. She chuckled, but it was more of a release and tears filled her eyes. As if she needed to hear someone say it. Make it true for her.

"There is still a lot of good you can do, Faith. We can help you with that."

"We?" she said. "It seems that you're the only one in my corner right now. No one would cry over my grave if I died right now."

"Do you blame them for that?" he asked, softly.

"No." She took a deep breath. "Besides, what good could I be to the world?"

"You're a Slayer," he said. "Believe me when I tell you that there is a higher power behind all things. You were chosen for this Faith. They saw something in you that made you worthy of becoming a Slayer."

"Then they're worse than the DMV. I never should have been given my Slayer license. I'm a broken Slayer."

"You're on the mend," he corrected her. "You've survived this long. You haven't always lived well, but you're still here. You can make it through this."

"You're cheering from the cheap seats, Angel. The rest of the stadium is full of the people who want my hide. Some of them are the ones I've killed. The bad ones, too. I'm never gonna forget any of their faces."

"And you shouldn't," Angel said, honestly. "But you also shouldn't forget all the people that you've saved. There are many out there alive right now because of you. You may not have seen them, they may not have seen you, but you still saved them."

"You mean slaying vamps and demons? I was just getting my jollies off. Looking for a rush, having fun."

Angel's eyebrows rose. "Okay, not exactly Slayer lore for the Codex. The point is, for whatever reason, you were still doing good. You wanted to do good. You still can."

Faith considered his words, staring at the table silently. Finally, she said, "Not now."

She raised her head and he nodded.

"I need to take a break from killing things and I'm not just talking about humans."

He nodded again. He remembered how she reacted to the blood on her hands when she had killed the demon that attacked them earlier tonight. She had been on the verge of withdrawing again and he had held her tight, trying to keep from losing her. Of course, it hadn't

helped matters when Buffy chose that moment to walk in on them.

"When you're ready," he told her.

Again, there was a trace of a smile on her face. "What? You gonna bust me out?"

Angel tried to keep his expression stoic but couldn't completely stop the upward tug of his lips.

Faith shook her head. "I mean, it's safer with me in here."

"You still need to be on your guard, though. The people who hired you might try to come after you in prison."

"I can handle that. I just meant, that the world was safer with me in here." She looked forlornly at the table again and seemed to remember something. "You know, after I woke up someone told me that there was no place in the world for me anymore. That my days were numbered."

"Who told you this?"

Faith opened her mouth but couldn't say anything as tears filled her eyes again.

"The Mayor?" Angel asked. Faith nodded, looking down at the table. "How--?"

"He, uh, left me a video tape." She chuckled with irony. "He was probably the most evil thing in Sunnydale and he was planning to eat the entire town, and I went to bed with him."

She saw the look of surprise on Angel's face and quickly shook her head.

"No, I don't mean I slept with him. I joined his camp. But for some reason --I can't explain-- he actually cared about me. At first, he would see me when he had a job he wanted me to do, but then he started to come over and take me places just to be with me. You know what he did when you and Buffy tricked me into given up his plans for graduation day? He took me to play miniature golf to make me feel better." She scoffed, rubbing her hands together, clinking the cuffs. "I guess it would take someone pure evil, sadistic --not to mention very sanitary-- to love someone like me. He actually got me to curb my swearing when I was around him, how messed up is that?"

Angel was silent for a moment. "And when he told you your days were numbered . . ."

"I believed him." Her tears seemed on the verge of falling.

"He was right."

Faith gave him a surprised look.

"The person you were when you woke up wouldn't have lasted long out there," he continued. "But you're changing that now. You're no longer her, Faith."

"But I can't take back what I did," she told him.

"No, you can't. But the fact that you want to is good. Maybe you can start by forgiving yourself."

Faith met his eyes again. "Have you?"

"Have I forgiven you?"

"No. Have you forgiven yourself?"

Angel glanced down at the table.

"So the pot is talking to the kettle," she said, softly.

They sat there quietly for a moment.

"She asked me if I was alright," Faith finally said.

"What?"

The tears were back in force. "After I woke up, the first thing Buffy asked me when she saw me was if I was alright. And I hit her." The first tears fell down her cheeks. "I hit her. She may not have thrown her arms around me and given me a sisterly hug . . . but she was concerned enough to ask how I was." A pain-filled chuckle. "Well, I made damn sure that she would never ask me that ever again, didn't I?"

She looked at him. "God, she must hate you right now. For helping me."

"I told you, Faith," he said, softly, "this isn't about Buffy."

"I'm sorry for that."

"Don't worry about me and Buffy. You need to help yourself right now."

Faith looked like she wanted to press the point but saw his expression and nodded.

"What have you already told the police?" he asked.

"Uh, just copped to the things I've done here in L.A., so far. I was about to tell them what I did to Wesley but that's when you stepped in."

"Don't tell them about Wesley," he said. "I spoke to him . . . he's not gonna press charges."

"Was that your idea?"

"No. He told me he wasn't."

"Oh." Faith lowered her eyes to the table. "I never liked Wesley, but . . ." She struggled with her next words. "But he didn't deserve what I did to him."

"No. He didn't."

"I'm still gonna tell them. What I did to Wesley. I have to. I need to tell someone."

Angel saw the look in her eyes and nodded that he understood.

"I need to tell them everything," she went on. "If only to get it out there. Out of me. They're probably gonna want to throw me in the loony house when I start talking about all the demony parts."

"Kate is handling your confession? I mean, Detective Lockley?"

"Yeah. The blonde cop."

"She knows about demons. She'll probably have to throw out the confessions that involve too much supernatural stuff, however."

"I guess that's okay. There's still enough to put me away for several lifetimes."

They looked towards the door as it opened and Detective Lockley stepped inside.

"All right, Angel. You're five minutes are up," she said, abruptly.

Angel stood and looked down at Faith.

"If there's anything you ever need . . . all you have to do is call."

The tears were beginning to dry on her cheeks. She nodded.

He turned and walked towards the door. When he was close to Kate, the detective whispered, "You know she's never getting out."

He gave her a sharp look. "Were you listening in?"

"I told you I wouldn't," she said, in a cold tone.

His voices softened. "Thank you."

Her voice didn't. "She's not worth it, Angel."

"She is." He met her gaze evenly.

"Why?"

Before he could answer . . .

"Angel."

He turned and walked back to the table. Kate opened her mouth to protest, but didn't say anything and sighed impatiently instead.

Faith looked up at him as he stood beside the table. She fidgeted with the cuffs on her wrists. "I don't think I ever thanked you for

helping me."

"It's okay."

"No. You risked your life to help me. After everything I've done . . ." She lowered her head. There were new tears in her eyes when she looked up at him again. "Thanks."

He could feel tears start to burn his eyes but he fought them back. He reached a hand and laid it over hers.

"You were wrong, you know," he said gently.

"About what?" she asked.

"I know somebody who would cry for you."

Faith didn't say anything. Just let the tears roll down her cheeks. Then she suddenly shot up from the chair. The chain on the handcuffs snapped and she threw her arms around him. He returned the hug and closed his eyes as he felt a shuddering sob go through her.

"Stand away from her, now!"

Angel and Faith tensed.

"Oops," she said.

They slowly separated and Faith raised her hands. He saw Kate with her pistol drawn pointing it at Faith. The Slayer smiled through her tears.

"Uh, sorry about the cuffs."

"It's all right, Kate," he said, trying to calm her down. "She's not going anywhere."

"Move away from her," she ordered. He complied but Kate kept the gun on Faith. "Face the wall."

Faith did as she was told and the detective slapped on a new pair of cuffs, not bothering to removed the broken ones. Kate saw Angel still standing there as she led her back to the table. "Go. Get out of here. But don't leave the station. I still have some questions for you."

Angel glanced at Faith as she sat down at the table. He still saw the tortured pain of her conscience still weighing on her, but the look in her eyes didn't seem quite as old as it had earlier. He took back what he had thought earlier.

"I'm not going anywhere," he said.

Faith had killed the monster.

# May 14, 2000

End  
file.